ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

This invention reduces the scale of a Huffman table used for decoding. A cueing unit (101) cues a variable-length code word from a received bitstream. A switch circuit (102) discriminates the type of the code word in accordance with the pattern of a predetermined number of bits at the start of the cued variable-length code word, extracts data having a sufficient code word length from a predetermined bit position on the basis of the discrimination result, and outputs the result to a Huffman table (104). The Huffman table (104) compares the data from the switch circuit (102) with a variable-length code word stored in advance, and when the data and the variable-length code word coincide, outputs first symbol data. The Huffman table (104) also generates a sum value (107, 108) for the first symbol data, and generates two second symbols from the sum result. A selection unit (106) selects and outputs one of the first symbol and two second symbols in accordance with the type of the received code. A selection unit (109) selects and outputs one of the symbol selected by the selection unit (106) and a symbol from an FLC decoder (110) on the basis of the data cued by the cueing unit (101).